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INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE
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RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1062
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 000530

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/02/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [CASC](#) [EAID](#) [ELAB](#) [ETRD](#) [PHUM](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: HONDURAN COUP SITREP #8: EVENTS AS OF 07/02/09

NOON LOCAL (14:00 EDT)

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 523

[1](#)B. TEGUCIGALPA 521

[1](#)C. TEGUCIGALPA 517 AND OTHERS

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Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (b and d)

Outside Capital, Country Remains Quiet; Overnight Curfew
Continued

[1](#)1. (U) There have been a number of demonstrations, with more planned, in Honduras' major cities. While there have been isolated reports of road barricades and small demonstrations in rural areas, credible USG and Amcit sources from widespread villages and towns report that life is basically continuing as normal. RSO has received reports that pro-coup rallies are planned today in San Pedro Sula, Choluteca, Danli, Progreso and La Ceiba. Post has also received word the pro-coup camp is planning a rally at Toncontin International Airport on Saturday to prevent Zelaya's announced return. In Tegucigalpa, most of the city is functioning as normal. A pro-Zelaya demonstration of approximately 2,000 people marched from Parque Obelisco to the National Congress Building adjacent to Central Park downtown, then at noon local time they joined another group in front of the UN mission nearby.

[1](#)2. (U) Authorities have announced that a 22:00 to 05:00 local time (00:00 to 07:00 EDT) curfew will continue through Friday. The Honduran National Police (HNP) report 80 arrests nationwide Wednesday night for curfew violations. The curfew was formalized by a Congressional decree July 1 which appears to allow police to arrest and hold for 24 hours those found outside after curfew, to search homes without warrants during curfew, and suspends the right of association during these hours. The Ambassador has called Human Rights Commissioner Ramon Custodio to voice our concern.

[1](#)3. (U) RSO reports that during the July 1 anti-coup protest,

an undercover HNP officer monitoring the demonstration was identified by the crowd, who began to beat him, but then allowed him safe egress.

Political Developments

¶4. (C) The Ambassador spoke July 1 with Attorney General Rubi, lead presidential candidates Elvin Santos and Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo about the political situation. The Ambassador stressed our condemnation of the coup and called for a negotiated solution that would allow the return of President Zelaya and the restoration of democracy. The First Lady and her youngest son remain at the Ambassador's Residence, but are being reassured they are safe to return to their own homes.

5.(C) A source connected to Liberal Party Congressman Jose Azcona (strictly protect) told EconCouns around noon local time that he and approximately 15 other members of Congress would sign a document this afternoon in Puerto Cortes labeling the events of June 28 a coup. Azcona has been trying to act as a go-between to get dialogue started between Micheletti's regime, the Zelaya Government and other key political figures on a conditional return of President Zelaya.

¶6. (C) A former Supreme Court Magistrate presented Post's FSN Legal Advisor with documents purported to be the arrest warrant and search warrant for President Zelaya and his residence, dated June 26. Their veracity has not been confirmed.

¶7. (U) Media report Marcelo Chimirri, a former HONDUTEL

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official who had been indicted prior to June 28 was arrested by the police.

Infrastructure and Communications

¶8. (U) Toncontin and San Pedro Sula airports remain open for international flights, and American, Continental and Delta airlines continue to operate flights as usual. TACA continues to have difficulties as a result of an unrelated commercial dispute. As reported previously, some ad hoc roadblocks exist. Land borders with Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua have reopened to all traffic.

¶9. (SBU) The local American Airlines representative contacted EconCouns just after noon local time seeking guidance on whether to cancel operations Saturday, July 4, when Zelaya has announced he will return to Honduras. She said the airline needed to make a decision by Friday morning, July 3.

¶10. (U) Utilities are functioning at normal levels, and almost all television and radio broadcasts are back to normal, except for strongly pro-Zelaya Channel 36, which remains off the air. Public Affairs notes that while political chatter remains heavily pro-coup, media are now broadcasting pro-Zelaya messages as well.

Consular and Embassy Operations

¶11. (U) The Embassy is open for emergency services to Amcits only for the remainder of the work week. Embassy offices have returned to normal operations otherwise, with a liberal leave policy in place for employees who feel unsafe getting to the Embassy; no such cases have been reported, however, and personnel have expressed relief to get back to work. U.S. employees have been instructed to remain within cell phone reach and within the Tegucigalpa area over the long

weekend, unless specifically approved for travel abroad. An EAC meeting is scheduled for 14:00 local today, with results to be sent SEPTEL.

¶12. (U) The Consular Section has received welfare and whereabouts inquiries on 500 Amcits to date via telephone and email. Consular Section is issuing one warden update per day until further notice. Consular Section continues to regularly update ACS talking points on the Embassy website, and has advised Amcits to abide by the curfew.
LLORENS